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Annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2015

Summary

The present report provides an overview of inter-agency cooperation within the framework of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in 2015. It highlights the key activities of CEB in fostering a coherent approach on policy, operational and management matters to enhance United Nations system-wide coordination in support of intergovernmental mandates. It also provides information on efforts to enhance coherence and coordination on system-wide preparation for and follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits. In 2015, CEB continued its efforts to accelerate the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, support the transition to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and promote youth employment. Through its High-level Committee on Programmes, the Board also contributed to the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Seeking to increase the effectiveness and impact of operational activities of the United Nations system, CEB, through the United Nations Development Group, prioritized the coherent implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. With regard to administrative and management issues of system-wide concern, CEB, through its High-level Committee on Management, focused on the simplification and harmonization of business practices. The report also highlights coordination activities between CEB and other jointly financed bodies.

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I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2008 (LX), the present report provides an overview of the annual work of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). It also responds to the request by the General Assembly, in paragraph 4 (b) of its resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence, to include appropriate information on the work of the Board in its annual overview report to the Council, which is also studied by the Committee for Programme and Coordination, in order to promote more effective dialogue. The present report covers the year 2015.

2. In response to General Assembly resolution 70/8, in which the Assembly endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the work of its fifty-fifth session (A/70/16, chap. III.A), the present report highlights major activities carried out under the auspices of CEB. As a coordinating body, CEB and its subsidiary mechanisms, the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group, foster policy, management and operational coherence, the aim of which is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of United Nations system activities. Its activities respond to intergovernmental mandates and support Member States' priorities.

3. The General Assembly, in resolution 70/8, through its endorsement of the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, recognized the increasingly important role of CEB in promoting system-wide coherence and coordination, the elimination of duplication, greater effectiveness and a more efficient use of resources. In particular, it welcomed the Board's efforts to promote policy coordination and coherence, support United Nations conferences and summits, foster the harmonization and simplification of business practices and improve the effectiveness and impact of operational activities of the United Nations system. The Assembly also emphasized the key role played by CEB in ensuring coordinated United Nations system-wide support in the preparation of and follow-up to the post-2015 development agenda.

4. In the same resolution, the General Assembly welcomed efforts to increase the effectiveness, accountability and credibility of the United Nations system, including by reducing administrative and procedural burdens. Specifically, the Assembly noted the sharing of good practices in performance management, the strategic use of long-term agreements and enhanced collaboration in the area of procurement, including increasing opportunities for vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The Board was requested to provide an update on the Joint Operations Facility in Brazil, the aim of which is to streamline key operational areas by consolidating support services into one facility at the country level. The Assembly made additional requests relating to a coordinated approach to multilingualism, the mainstreaming of support for South-South cooperation and the continuation of dialogue between CEB and Member States.

5. The year 2015 was marked by a series of far-reaching global agreements, including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (General Assembly resolution 69/283, annex II), the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (see

General Assembly resolution 70/1) and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Together, the agreements form the normative basis for a transformative agenda for change and an interlinked framework that seeks to improve the lives of all people and set the world on a path to sustainable development. The General Assembly, in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, underscored the role of the United Nations system in supporting the achievement of sustainable development, noting the comparative advantage of an adequately resourced, relevant, coherent, efficient and effective system in that regard. For the United Nations system to effectively support Member States in the implementation of an interconnected global agenda, an integrated and coordinated approach is required in which it is recognized that eradicating poverty, combating inequality, preserving the planet, creating sustained economic growth and fostering social inclusion are linked to each other and are interdependent. In the present report it is described how, throughout 2015, CEB and its subsidiary bodies focused their efforts on supporting the transition to the new global agenda.

6. Transparency and accountability to Member States remain key priorities for CEB. In 2015, the Board continued to engage in substantive exchanges with Member States and to further enhance the information provided on its website (www.unsceb.org). The Board also continued to coordinate with other jointly financed bodies, in particular, the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and the Joint Inspection Unit.

II. Strengthening policy coherence and coordination

7. In 2015, CEB pursued a number of initiatives for advancing policy coherence and programmatic coordination in the following areas: supporting the transition to and future implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; youth employment; and the data revolution. Those system-wide activities were carried out in response to intergovernmental mandates, including General Assembly resolutions 70/1, 70/127 and 69/313.

8. In addition, at its second regular session of 2015, CEB supported the implementation of the system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the General Assembly in 2007, and efforts to raise awareness on indigenous peoples' issues. The action plan had been developed pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/2 to promote system-wide coherence in addressing the rights and well-being of indigenous peoples in the Organization's work in support of the implementation of the Declaration.

A. Supporting implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

9. In September 2015, the General Assembly, in resolution 70/1, adopted a comprehensive set of transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets that provides a framework for action geared towards markedly improving the lives of all people; protecting the Earth's natural resources; and fostering peaceful, just and inclusive societies through a new global partnership for sustainable development.

10. Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the General Assembly, in its resolution 70/8, emphasized the key role played by CEB in ensuring coordinated United Nations system-wide support in the preparation of and follow-up to the post-2015 development agenda, in accordance with relevant intergovernmental mandates. The Assembly requested the Board to include in the present report information on ways and means of strengthening that role to foster policy coherence in the United Nations system in order to ensure coordinated and effective action on the wide range of programmatic, management and operational issues linked to the global agenda.

11. In 2015, building on its earlier work in this area, CEB, through the High-level Committee on Programmes, took steps to enhance the collective capacities of the United Nations system to support Member States in the transition to and implementation of an integrated and transformative sustainable development agenda. In doing so, the Committee focused its efforts on the issues of inequality; human rights; preventing conflict; and promoting peaceful, just and inclusive societies, with a view to deepening collaboration and enhancing integration throughout the work of the United Nations system.

12. Rising inequalities within and among countries have been recognized by Member States as a growing challenge. A central defining objective of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the commitment to leave no one behind and to reach those furthest behind first. This core commitment reinforces the existing mandate of the United Nations system to promote and encourage respect for human rights and normative standards for equality and non-discrimination. In an effort to assist Member States in addressing existing disparities of opportunity, wealth and power and in reducing inequalities within and among countries, the High-level Committee on Programmes considered the linkages between inequalities and human rights, as well as the practical implications of systematically integrating into the work of the United Nations measures to reduce inequality and end discrimination. Under the leadership of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Committee reflected on the issue of addressing inequalities and discrimination in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as a basis for elaborating a United Nations system-wide framework for action that is operationally oriented and grounded in the Organization's normative standards and that enhances the coherence and synergy of United Nations system-wide activities.

13. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States asserted that sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security, and that peace and security would be at risk without sustainable development. Recognizing the interrelated nature of all of the Sustainable Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda calls for integrated solutions and a redoubling of efforts to resolve and prevent conflicts and build peaceful, just and inclusive societies. CEB recognizes the critical interlinkages of the three pillars of the mandates of the United Nations and the importance of an integrated system-wide approach to global challenges. To develop a greater common understanding of the key issues and challenges of such an approach, the High-level Committee on Programmes discussed the issue and noted that conflict prevention was a shared responsibility of the entire United Nations system. The Committee also identified risk management and resilience-building as two areas requiring additional analytical work.

14. In response to the request of Member States for coherent and integrated support from the United Nations development system for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Development Group established a dedicated sustainable development working group and agreed on an initial set of core principles to guide system-wide support for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. This support is guided by the imperative of national ownership, with actions firmly determined by country needs and national capacities, and is based on increasingly integrated strategic analysis, policy advice and programme support, which draw on the wide range of expertise from across the United Nations development system. In 2015, more than 70 countries requested the services of United Nations country teams to support integration of the Sustainable Development Goals into national or sectoral plans and programmes.

B. Promoting youth employment

15. In 2015, the General Assembly marked the twentieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth by taking stock of progress made and discussing the way forward towards full and effective implementation. The Programme of Action, adopted by the Assembly in 1995, provides the policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the well-being of young people around the world. In successive resolutions on policies and programmes involving youth, Member States have requested the United Nations system to continue its coordination towards a more coherent, comprehensive and integrated approach to youth development, most recently in Assembly resolution 70/127.

16. At its second regular session of 2015, CEB endorsed the global initiative on decent jobs for youth. Prepared through an inter-agency consultative process under the leadership of the International Labour Organization, the initiative aims to facilitate increased impact and expanded country-level action on decent jobs for youth through multi-stakeholder partnerships. It builds on and is complementary to the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Youth, in which youth employment and entrepreneurship is one of five priority areas, and will also contribute to the achievement of relevant targets of Sustainable Development Goal 8, on the promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

C. Contributing to the data revolution

17. The importance of timely, reliable and accessible data was a consistent theme throughout the process that culminated in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The General Assembly, in its resolution 69/313, called upon the United Nations system to develop transparent measurements of progress on sustainable development. Acknowledging the important role of data in assessing progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and enabling detailed analysis of programmatic activities, CEB, in 2015, took steps to enhance the capacity of the United Nations system to harness data in a way that informs internal programming and decision-making, facilitates the sharing of data and improves data coherence. At its first regular session of 2015, CEB endorsed a United Nations system approach for a data revolution designed to strengthen the capacity of the system to utilize new

and emerging technologies and sources of data in support of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The aim of the initiative is to complement ongoing efforts by the United Nations Statistical Commission for the creation and implementation of a framework of indicators for the 2030 Agenda.

18. One initiative that gained particular momentum in 2015 was the United Nations system data catalogue project, the aim of which is to maximize the benefits of making United Nations system data open and accessible to the public and other key stakeholders, promote open data publishing among United Nations system organizations and expand the availability and accessibility of information to support decision-making by United Nations system organizations and Member States. As of the end of 2015, the catalogue comprised nearly 4,000 data sets. An initial public launch of the data catalogue in 2016 is foreseen.

III. Promoting system-wide preparation for and follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits

19. In 2015, CEB responded to calls by the General Assembly for system-wide coordination in the follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit and the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, by promoting coherence in the implementation of conference outcomes. Furthermore, CEB prepared joint contributions as United Nations system-wide inputs in support of the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

20. Pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 67/220, 68/224 and 69/231, the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 has been a standing item on the Board's agenda since the first regular session of 2013, with a view to supporting the system-wide follow-up of its implementation. To contribute to this work and further strengthen coordination, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, in consultation with the Inter-Agency Consultative Group for least developed countries, prepared a toolkit for mainstreaming the Istanbul Programme of Action into the work programmes of the United Nations system organizations. The Inter-Agency Consultative Group endorsed the draft toolkit at its 13th meeting, on 24 November 2015, and the High-level Committee on Programmes is expected to complete its review early in 2016.

21. Building on work undertaken in 2014, CEB issued a joint statement at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015. The statement highlighted the commitment of the United Nations system to ensuring that its collective efforts to achieve sustainable development were anchored in disaster risk reduction for resilience, supporting countries in establishing strong risk governance with informed and effective leadership and promoting coherent and effective operations. The Board, at its second regular session of 2015, agreed to prepare, under the leadership of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, a revised version of the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience to take into

account developments in relation to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

22. CEB, through its High-level Committee on Programmes, further advanced the preparation of a coherent United Nations system input for Habitat III, to be held in Quito in October 2016, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/216. The finalized system-wide contribution will be put before CEB for its consideration and endorsement at its first regular session of 2016, and will be made available as part of the preparatory process for Habitat III, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/8, in advance of the session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, scheduled to be held in July 2016 in Jakarta.

A. Accelerating implementation of the Millennium Development Goals

23. With the aim of helping to accelerate progress in countries not on track to reach one or more of the Millennium Development Goals, CEB had conducted a review of the implementation of the Goals at the country level at each of its meetings since its first regular session of 2013. The review was led jointly by the President of the World Bank Group and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme. It identified bottlenecks preventing progress in meeting the Goals and committed United Nations system organizations to take specific actions to help countries to achieve results.

24. Since its advent, the review has featured 16 countries and 1 region and has encompassed targets on poverty and hunger, maternal and child mortality, water and sanitation, education, nutrition, employment and health. It has been a system-wide effort, taking an integrated, cross-sectoral approach at the country level. In its resolutions 69/17 and 70/8, the General Assembly welcomed the Board's initiative to accelerate the achievement of the Goals and its active approach in support of country-level efforts in order to achieve tangible results.

25. In 2015, at the fifth round of the review, the Board focused on Goal 6 (combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) and specifically assessed efforts to accelerate progress to reduce the prevalence and incidence of and mortality from tuberculosis in Bangladesh; combat HIV/AIDS and malaria in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and reduce the prevalence and incidence of and mortality from non-communicable diseases in Pacific island countries. The United Nations resident coordinators, World Bank country directors and CEB members discussed ways to advance the achievement of health-related targets in the respective country settings with a view to enhancing support in the countries and promoting greater coordination of agency programmes.

26. At the sixth and final round of the review, the Board held a discussion on lessons learned from the initiative that could be applied in the context of supporting implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Members agreed that the review process had reinforced and improved the coordination and coherence of United Nations system-wide support for the implementation of country-owned action plans for the acceleration of the achievement of Millennium Development Goals. It led to increased harmonization and sharing of good practices and a more targeted focus. The Board agreed that, in pursuing the Sustainable Development Goals, it would be necessary to take a similarly flexible and integrated approach

that capitalized on the diversity and specialized strengths of individual organizations of the United Nations system.

B. Facilitating United Nations system action on climate change

27. In December 2015, at the conclusion of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris, Member States adopted the Paris Agreement, a global commitment to ambitious climate action. In a joint statement issued prior to the session, CEB members pledged their support to Member States in addressing climate change in the context of overall efforts to pursue sustainable development and in building the resilience of people, communities and countries to the adverse effects of climate change.

28. At the session, the collective engagement of the United Nations system was coordinated and streamlined with a view to making the climate-related knowledge and services of the system more accessible to negotiating parties and demonstrating the readiness of the system to deliver coordinated support to Member States on climate action. Specifically, the High-level Committee on Programmes Working Group on Climate Change coordinated 16 side events organized jointly by the United Nations system, which were focused on various aspects of the transition to low-carbon development; facilitated a "One United Nations" exhibit that brought together United Nations system entities on key issues such as sustainable cities, transport and climate finance; disseminated an updated version of the joint publication entitled "How the United Nations system supports ambitious action on climate change"; and made available a compilation of the most recent and relevant publications on climate change of the United Nations system.

IV. Enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and impact of United Nations operational activities for development

29. In 2015, the United Nations Development Group continued to place the highest priority on ensuring coherent implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, with a particular focus on the improved functioning of the United Nations development system, national capacity development and development effectiveness, South-South cooperation and gender equality and women's empowerment.

30. The mainstreaming of support for South-South cooperation into country-level programming continued to be of high importance for the United Nations Development Group in 2015. Pursuant to decision 18/1 of the High-level Committee on South-South cooperation and General Assembly resolution 69/239, the United Nations Development Group established a task team on South-South and triangular cooperation, which seeks to mobilize human, financial and other resources of United Nations organizations to undertake concerted activities that contribute to systematic and coordinated support for South-South and triangular cooperation in operational activities of the United Nations at the country and regional levels.

31. As part of efforts to bolster South-South and triangular cooperation, the task team started the mapping of good practices that are supported by the United Nations system and other multilateral organizations, including subregional and regional institutions. It is envisaged that such a compilation of good practices would equip the United Nations resident coordinators and United Nations country teams with policy tools, practical solutions and strategies to advise national Governments on concrete measures to integrate South-South and triangular cooperation into national development plans and actions.

32. In order to foster the integration of South-South approaches, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation provided technical assistance to United Nations country teams in the application of South-South cooperation through learning events and a workshop on United Nations support for middle-income countries in East, Southern and West Africa. The Task Team has also begun to update and align the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (see SSC/17/3) with the Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

33. The United Nations Development Group continued to make progress in implementing mandates of the General Assembly on gender equality and women's empowerment. Currently, around 61 per cent of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks feature specific results on gender equality, up from 45 per cent the previous year. Furthermore, the Group initiated the mapping of human resources working on gender equality across the United Nations system, the findings of which are expected to contribute to preparatory work for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system in 2016.

34. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework continues to serve as a key tool for strengthening coherence and accountability at the country level. In 2015, the United Nations Development Group commenced work on new guidelines for country programming that respond to the demands of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through actions towards a truly integrated response in the areas of common analysis, planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

35. The General Assembly, in its resolution 67/226, recognized the important contribution of "Delivering as one" for enhancing the coherence, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations development system. Over the course of the past year, the United Nations Development Group continued to make significant progress in ensuring that the second generation of "Delivering as one", called for and led by national Governments, had the intended impact on improving results, accountability, and monitoring and evaluation. By the end of 2015, 52 Governments had formally requested the United Nations development system to "deliver as one" in their countries. The Group continued to roll out the standard operating procedures for United Nations country teams and launched a tracker on its website (www.undg.org), which provides an overview of the progressive implementation of the procedures in each country. The implementation of the standard operating procedures by an increasing number of country teams has helped to improve internal organization, reduce transaction costs for Governments and create efficiencies in business operations.

36. In order to enhance strategic planning and reporting on results of United Nations operations at the country level, the United Nations Development Group expanded the roll-out of the business operations strategy to 36 countries with a view to enhancing the cost-effectiveness and quality of operational support processes. An evaluation revealed that implementation of the strategy added significant value to programme countries in terms of efficiency of implementation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and the achievement of development results. In the implementation of the strategy, efficiency gains were also realized in the area of operational support both through volume discounts and the bypassing of transaction costs across all participating United Nations entities at the country level.

37. Furthermore, the United Nations Development Group is increasingly focusing on enhancing the implementation of common services. To that end, the Group initiated the collection and consolidation of proven concepts of joint operations with the aim of reducing transaction costs of the development and implementation of common operations at the country level under the business operations strategy. These standardized common services provide an off-the-shelf solution that countries can adapt to their local needs. Examples of standardized common service packages include renewable energy solutions and Global Positioning System tracking systems to enhance security and reduce fleet management costs.

38. With a focus on the governance of common operations services at the country level, the United Nations Development Group and the High-level Committee on Management started to pilot a new integrated service centre — the Joint Operations Facility — in Brazil, due to formally commence operations in January 2016. The Facility streamlines key operational areas of participating agencies by consolidating operational support services across the United Nations system into one facility at the country level. It has been devised as a common services centre in the areas of procurement, travel and information and communications technology. Such a consolidation is expected to reduce the duplication of functions and lower administrative and transaction costs, while at the same time increasing the quality and effectiveness of those services.

39. Seven United Nations system organizations were participating in the initiative at the end of 2015. The Joint Operations Facility reinforces the simplification of processes and the harmonization of procedures, integrates operational services more efficiently and effectively and allows organizations to focus on strategic activities and programmes. It is expected to assure quality and control, generate economies of scale and increase transparency and coherence among United Nations entities and between the United Nations system and external clients and partners.

40. Pursuant to resolution 67/226, in which the General Assembly encouraged Member States making non-core contributions to give priority to pooled, thematic and joint funding mechanisms applied at the global, regional and country levels, the United Nations Development Group relaunched the "Delivering Results Together" fund. The overall objective of the fund is to support "Delivering as one" countries in achieving sustainable development results by funding the integrated policy work of the United Nations system in alignment with national development goals and priorities.

41. The United Nations Development Group also actively supported the strengthening of the partnership between the United Nations and the World Bank in fragile and conflict-affected countries, including through the development of a

strategic results framework on strategic and operational collaboration and a review of the methodology for joint post-conflict needs assessments.

42. In 2015, the United Nations Development Group took additional steps to improve the effectiveness of the resident coordinator system. The resident coordinator competency framework was updated to better reflect the key facets of the resident coordinator's role, the complexity of the external context and the commitment of the United Nations system to enhancing coherence in the way that programmes and operations are delivered at the country level. The Group also finalized the concept for a new performance management system in order to enhance the collaboration and accountability of United Nations country teams.

43. In order to ensure that resident coordinators had the stable and predictable resources necessary to fulfil their mandate effectively, the United Nations Development Group continued implementation of the global cost-sharing arrangement in support of the resident coordinator system, as called for by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2014/14 and by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/226.

V. Improving and innovating administrative and management functions of the United Nations system

44. At its session in March 2015, the High-level Committee on Management reviewed the status of implementation of its strategic plan for 2013-2016, which it deemed to be on track for successful completion. In the plan, the harmonization and simplification of business practices are identified as the core objective, and actions are outlined that are informed by and respond to relevant priorities set by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/226, in particular, the rationalization of business operations, the development of inter-agency framework agreements, the establishment of common support services and greater collaboration in procurement.

45. In 2015, the High-level Committee on Management Procurement Network continued to actively pursue collaboration and the harmonization of policies and procedures in the area of procurement. The harmonized procurement guidance developed by the Committee showed promising results, with initial reports pointing towards a growing trend of long-term agreements being established, the aims of which are to avoid duplication in procurement processes, create economies of scale and generate savings. Enhanced country-level support for the roll-out of the common procurement approach is planned for 2016, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Group. In addition, a "collaboration clause" has been adopted, which allows all participating organizations to accept the outcome of another organization's procurement process with reference to standard clauses in the relevant internal guidelines, thereby avoiding duplication of internal controls across organizations and improving efficiency and effectiveness through increased collaboration. This approach is in line with the progressive adoption by United Nations system organizations of the concept of mutual recognition in operational activities.

46. The Procurement Network also continued to work on a number of projects geared towards the enhancement of common services. A project on the common procurement of vehicles has led to the establishment of long-term agreements for

several vehicle models. Additional long-term agreements are currently being established to cover the full range of models. Furthermore, joint long-term agreements have been put in place for freight forwarding and are expected to generate significant savings across the United Nations system. Procurement collaboration at headquarters duty stations continued throughout 2015.

47. The new vendor registration system for procurement, which had been introduced on the United Nations Global Marketplace (www.ungm.org) in 2013, continued to generate increased efficiency in vendor registration and has led to a large increase in registered vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. In its resolution 70/8, the General Assembly recognized the efforts of CEB to enhance collaboration on procurement activities and asked the Board to continue work in this area. In 2015, the total number of vendors increased by 16 per cent from the previous year to around 81,000. The number of vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition doubled between the end of 2013 and the end of 2014, and continued to rise in 2015. The number of registered vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition increased to more than 48,000 by late in 2015, representing 60 per cent of the total.

48. In 2015, the High-level Committee on Management considered the findings of the feasibility study on enterprise resource planning interoperability. The analysis provided recommendations beyond technical solutions and represented an important input into ongoing work to improve the efficiency of the United Nations development system through collaboration in the area of business operations. In its follow-up, the Committee established a cross-functional task force to conduct an in-depth review and assessment of the conclusions with regard to costs, benefits, risks and relevance to United Nations business processes and to formulate recommendations that were due to be considered by the Committee at its session in March 2016.

49. In the area of finance and budget, the High-level Committee on Management Finance and Budget Network continued its work in the area of emergency preparedness and organizational resilience. Since the endorsement of the organizational resilience management system by CEB in 2014, 26 organizations and entities have reported on their efforts to apply the key performance indicators in order to assess progress achieved on organizational resilience and the capability of the United Nations system to safeguard its personnel and assets. To date, the greatest progress has been made in the areas of policy, governance and risk management.

50. In the area of treasury services, the establishment of common banking agreements in more than 12 countries has begun. The agreements will result in an overall reduction of banking charges and operational risks and will generate significant savings in local efforts required for the selection, documentation and monitoring of banking services. Negotiations have also progressed with the four largest banks with which the United Nations does business to put in place global agreements in order to gain benefits from increased economies of scale. Early in 2016, the master banking services agreement between the Secretariat and Standard Chartered Bank will be the first such global contract to be signed, enabling United Nations system entities to access banking and treasury services in 28 countries from Standard Chartered Bank and its subsidiaries. The adoption of a standardized and

coordinated approach to the procurement and administration of global banking services will improve efficiencies across the organizations of the United Nations system. The remainder of the banking agreements with the other major banking partners of the United Nations are expected to be concluded by the end of 2016.

51. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/244 on managing after-service health insurance liabilities, the Finance and Budget Network conducted a system-wide study in 2015, in which it analysed commonalities and differences between United Nations system organizations with regard to the definition, funding and management of after-service health insurance. In the study, a comprehensive view was offered of the actual situation of health plans and the after-service health insurance funds and liabilities of each agency, providing the basis for further consideration of options to increase efficiency and contain costs. A report on the outcome of the study has been submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration (A/70/590).

52. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/17, the High-level Committee on Management Human Resources Network organized a workshop to exchange experiences and identify good practices in key areas of performance management. In the next phase, a measurement framework will be prepared to monitor the overall quality and maturity of organizational performance management schemes. Additionally, proposals will be developed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of collaboration among the performance management experts of the United Nations system.

53. CEB recognizes the importance of multilingualism and continued efforts to promote and facilitate it in response to General Assembly resolution 67/292. A survey among CEB member organizations on the effect of those efforts was conducted in 2015. The results showed that member organizations distribute all internal and external publications in at least two of the six official languages of the United Nations, in addition to the local language when considered necessary.

54. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/9, which deals with the use of official United Nations terminology, and resolution 69/324 on multilingualism, and noting that many CEB member organizations already have official repositories for terminology, the CEB secretariat promoted the utilization of those valuable resources across the system in all aspects of organizations' internal and external communications. For any United Nations system organization that may not have such terminology assets, and in response to General Assembly resolution 68/251, the CEB secretariat is urging organizations to refer to UNTERM, the global terminology database, as a key repository of United Nations terminology. The database, which is maintained by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management of the Secretariat, provides terminology and nomenclature in subjects relevant to the work of the United Nations. It is available from http://untermportal.un.org and offers access to both the general public and logged-in users. The CEB secretariat will continue to work with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management to support the sharing of multilingual knowledge and resources and access to official United Nations terminology with CEB member organizations.

VI. Implementing the International Public Sector Accounting Standards

55. Following the decision of the High-level Committee on Management on the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) by the United Nations system in 2005 and the establishment of a jointly funded system-wide project in 2006 (see CEB/2006/3), all 24 organizations have completed their implementation of IPSAS successfully and continue to receive unqualified audit opinions, including the three organizations that presented their first IPSAS-compliant financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014. The results attest to the capability of the United Nations system to both adopt and sustain compliance with IPSAS to improve the quality of financial reporting and enhance transparency and accountability.

56. The key activities of the Task Force on Accounting Standards in the post-implementation period are targeted at sustaining IPSAS compliance, leveraging the benefits of IPSAS, enhancing the quality of IPSAS-compliant financial statements and other financial reports and identifying potential areas for harmonization of financial reporting policies and practices across the United Nations system.

57. In 2015, the Task Force commissioned a number of thematic focus groups to: (a) develop tools for analyses of useful economic lives and impairment of property, plant and equipment; (b) review requirements of the newly issued IPSAS standards on accounting for interest in other entities; and (c) address financial reporting issues in the areas of common premises and inter-agency balances. The thematic groups will continue their activities in 2016. Recently, the Task Force also established new thematic groups to consider harmonization of after-service health insurance accounting and valuation methodologies across the United Nations system, as well as streamlining accounting for accrued liabilities attributable to the jointly financed activities.

58. The system-wide IPSAS project team continues to support the Task Force by facilitating its meetings and communication with high-level committees and external auditors, actively monitoring the activities of the IPSAS Board, coordinating IPSAS-compliant financial reporting diversity and providing guidance and support in areas of special interest identified by the Task Force.

VII. Improving transparency and accountability

59. Continuing the direct and substantive dialogue between CEB and Member States, as called for by the General Assembly in its resolutions 64/289 and 69/17, and enhancing the Board's transparency and accountability remained a priority for the Board in 2015. To engage with Member States, briefings and dialogues were organized throughout the year. In February, the Vice-Chair of the High-level Committee on Management presented an update to the Economic and Social Council on the theme "The United Nations system's integrated approach to the harmonization and simplification of business operations", followed by a joint briefing by the secretariat of the Committee and the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office on coordination between the United Nations Development Group and the Committee in March. The Secretary of CEB provided an informal briefing on United Nations coordination mechanisms to the Council in

May, followed by a formal briefing on the work of CEB in June. Also in June, the Committee for Programme and Coordination received a mandated presentation on the Board's main activities by the CEB secretariat. In October, the Vice-Chair of the High-level Committee on Management and the co-Chair of the Business Operations Working Group of the United Nations Development Group gave a briefing to Member States on the theme "The role of United Nations business operations in a post-2015 world".

60. In addition, the United Nations Development Group published its first results report, entitled "Results delivered: sharing successes in 2014", which had a focus on the results of the Group's cost-sharing modality at the country, regional and global levels. The report was informed by data from the Group's newly established global information management system, which allows for systematic and more accurate tracking and data collection from resident coordinator offices on coordination results. The system is expected to become a key tool for assessing progress on coherence and coordination at the country level.

61. Overseeing improvements in the performance and security of the CEB website was another important activity in 2015. The annual exercises of collecting and validating human resources data and financial statistics were carried out, and work began on the redesign of data collection requirements, processes and platforms to be phased in during the course of 2016, with a view towards reaching full compliance with the International Aid Transparency Initiative.

VIII. Coordination between the Chief Executives Board and other jointly financed bodies

62. CEB, through its subsidiary bodies, continues to contribute to the programme of work of both ICSC and the Joint Inspection Unit.

63. During the course of 2015, the High-level Committee on Management, through its Human Resources Network, continued to be actively engaged in the ICSC comprehensive review of the common system compensation package by participating in the sessions of the Commission and in the meetings of its three working groups concerned with remuneration, competitiveness and performance incentives. In November 2015, CEB issued a statement in which it welcomed the recommendations of ICSC as presented in the report of the Commission for 2015 (A/70/30), which were focused on streamlining, simplification and transparency, and cost efficiencies.

64. The strong collaboration between CEB and the Joint Inspection Unit also continued in 2015, as the Unit sustained its focus on issues of a system-wide nature. The Unit primarily interacts with the mechanisms of CEB during the preparation of its reports. For example, the High-level Committee on Management, through its Procurement Network, provided input to the preparation of the report of the Unit on contract management and administration in the United Nations system (see A/70/676). In addition, the Unit and the CEB secretariat continued their long-standing practice of consultation in the preparation of the terms of reference for upcoming reports and in the identification of relevant topics of system-wide impact for inclusion in the programme of work of the Unit.

IX. Conclusions

65. During the course of 2015, CEB systematically contributed to efforts by the United Nations system to enhance coordination and coherence across a range of programmatic, management and operational issues in support of intergovernmental mandates and priorities. As challenges facing the international community grew in complexity, the United Nations system sought to support Member States by promoting system-wide preparation for and follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits, strengthening policy coherence and coordination, enhancing the effectiveness and impact of United Nations operational activities for development and improving the administrative and management functions of the United Nations system.

66. An annex, which includes the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the work of its fifty-fifth session (A/70/16), is enclosed at the end of the present report.

Annex

Summary of the status of implementation of the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the work of its fifty-fifth session (A/70/16)

Conclusions and recommendations	*Status of implementation*
The Committee reiterated its recommendations to the General Assembly to bring to the attention of the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, the following concerns: (a) The need to ensure that the Board's activities and initiatives, including those relating to system-wide coherence, encompassing also the voluntary adoption of "Delivering as one" as defined in Assembly resolution 67/226, section IV.C, were fully in line with intergovernmental mandates; (b) The need to ensure enhanced alignment of the measures of the High-level Committee on Management with the existing United Nations legislative framework, including in the area of procurement (para. 261).	Throughout its work, the Board takes great care that its activities and initiatives, as well as work undertaken by its subsidiary bodies, are carried out in support of and in accordance with intergovernmental mandates, including General Assembly resolution 67/226, which guides system-wide efforts to enhance coherence and coordination of United Nations operational activities (see E/2016/56, para. 35). The High-level Committee on Management continued to actively pursue the collaboration and harmonization of policies and procedures in the area of procurement in response to relevant provisions included in General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and United Nations system rules and regulations governing procurement (see E/2016/56, para. 45).
The Committee recognized the work of CEB on the harmonization and simplification of business practices and welcomed the instances in which opportunities for efficiencies and the reduction of administrative and procedural burdens had been created, aiming at increasing the coherence, coordination, effectiveness, accountability and credibility of the United Nations system. The Committee reiterated its recommendation that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to address that issue (para. 263).	CEB, through its High-level Committee on Management, continues to address the issue of harmonization and simplification of business practices by focusing on the rationalization of business operations, the development of inter-agency framework agreements, the establishment of common support services and greater collaboration in procurement (see E/2016/56, paras. 44-54).
The Committee took note of the establishment of the Joint Operations Facility in Brazil as an effort to streamline key operational areas of participating agencies by consolidating support services, and recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to provide an update on the matter (para. 264).	The Joint Operations Facility in Brazil was due to formally commence operations in January 2016. The service centre streamlines key operational areas of participating agencies by consolidating operational support services across the United Nations system into one facility at the country level (see E/2016/56, paras. 38 and 39).

Conclusions and recommendations	*Status of implementation*
The Committee noted the initiative of CEB to share good practices in performance management through the exchange of experiences among human resources directors of participating organizations and recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to promote good practices among participating organizations (para. 265).	A workshop to share experiences and identify good practices in key areas of performance management was organized by the working group on performance management. As a next step, a measurement framework to monitor the overall quality and maturity of organizational performance management schemes will be developed (see E/2016/56, para. 52).
The Committee recalled paragraph 22 of General Assembly resolution 69/273 and recommended that the Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to promote the strategic use of long-term agreements, as appropriate, with regard to procurement activities in the United Nations system (para. 266).	The harmonized procurement guidance contributed to a growing trend towards establishing long-term agreements. Joint long-term agreements have been established in vehicle procurement and freight forwarding (see E/2015/56, paras. 45 and 46).
The Committee recognized the continuous efforts of CEB to enhance collaboration on procurement activities, including increasing the opportunities for vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue his efforts in that regard (para. 267).	The procurement network continued to actively pursue collaboration and the harmonization of policies and procedures in the area of procurement (see E/2016/56, paras. 44-47). The new vendor registration system for procurement continually generates efficiencies and has led to an increase from the previous year. The number of vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition also continued to rise in 2015 (ibid., para. 47).
The Committee emphasized the key role to be played by CEB in ensuring coordinated United Nations system-wide support in the preparation of and follow-up to the post-2015 development agenda, in accordance with relevant intergovernmental mandates. For that purpose, the Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to include in the annual report of CEB to the Committee at its fifty-sixth session information on ways and means of strengthening that role to foster policy coherence in the United Nations system in order to ensure coordinated and effective action on the wide range of programmatic, management and operational issues linked to that global agenda (para. 268).	In 2015, CEB took steps towards supporting Member States in the transition to and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and enhancing policy coherence in the United Nations system. Through its High-level Committee on Programmes, it specifically focused on the issues of inequality; human rights; and preventing conflict and promoting peaceful, just and inclusive societies, and the related practical implications for United Nations system activities. Furthermore, the United Nations Development Group established a dedicated sustainable development working group (see E/2016/56, paras. 9-14).
The Committee called upon the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to promote, within existing mandates, among the funds and programmes, as well as the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system, the continuation of mainstreaming support for South-South cooperation into the regular country-level programming of operational activities for development (para. 269).	CEB, through the United Nations Development Group, continued to mainstream South-South cooperation into country-level programming. A task team on South-South and triangular cooperation was created to mobilize human, financial and other resources to undertake coordinated activities in support of South-South and triangular cooperation in United Nations operational activities at the country and regional levels (see E/2016/56, paras. 30-32).

Conclusions and recommendations	*Status of implementation*
The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to present the system-wide input to the new urban agenda well in advance of the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), to be held in Jakarta from 25 to 27 July 2016, to allow for its proper consideration by Member States (para. 270).	CEB, through its High-level Committee on Programmes, further advanced the preparation of a coherent United Nations system input for the preparations for Habitat III (see E/2016/56, para. 22).
The Committee recognized the continued efforts of CEB to engage with Member States, including, but not limited to, the use of its website, to further enhance and strengthen the Board's transparency and accountability to Member States (para. 271).	CEB continued the direct and substantive dialogue with Member States by holding a series of briefings and dialogues throughout 2015. Work on the enhancement of the website included data collection and validation and starting the redesign of the home page. The United Nations Development Group also published its first results report (see E/2016/56, para. 59).
The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue to foster a coordinated approach to multilingualism in the United Nations system, in accordance with the relevant Assembly resolutions (para. 272).	CEB made continuous efforts in 2015 to promote and facilitate multilingualism, and its secretariat continues to work with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management to support the sharing of multilingual knowledge and resources (see E/2016/56, paras. 53 and 54).